

## First Grade Writing Lesson #1 with Narrative Prompt

<b>Title:</b>	Forever Friends
<b>Grade:</b>	First Grade
<b>Core Standards:</b>	Language Arts Standard 8—Students write daily to communicate effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences.
<b>Objective/Purpose:</b>	Students will write a descriptive paragraph about a friend.
<b>Time Required:</b>	Three 30-minute lessons
<b>Teacher Materials:</b>	Selected books about friends Chart paper Water-based marker
<b>Student Materials:</b>	Writing paper Pencil

### What to Do:

#### Session 1

1. Guide students through a think-aloud about a best friend. Describe the friend; tell experiences with the friend, and why the friend is important.
2. Read students a book about friends (for example: *Best Friends* by Steven Kellogg or *Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge* by Mem Fox).
3. Identify one of the characters from the book, and lead a discussion where the character is described. Use questioning to elicit specific qualities about the character.

#### Session 2

1. Review the activity from the previous session.
2. With help from the students, model writing a descriptive paragraph about the character from the book. Use chart paper and write in large print. Model the kinds of thinking that go into decisions about what to write, how to spell, and how to punctuate and capitalize.

3. Read the completed text to the students.
4. Ask students to think of a friend they would like to write about. Ask a few students to describe their friend. Then ask students to describe their friend to a partner. Have the students write the name of the friend on a piece of writing paper. Collect papers for the next day.

### **Session 3**

1. Review the previous day's discussion. Distribute papers with the friends' names. Have the students read the name and recall details about the friend they will write about.
2. Model for the students again describing your friend. Tell three details about the friend (for example: "Sandy has green eyes, she has a dog named Sam, and she is good at singing.")
3. Read the prompt to students.
4. Give students time to write. Circulate and conference.

**Writing Prompt:** Think about a special friend you have. Write at least three things about this friend.

Student Paper #1  
(First Grade Student)

Title: "Forever Friends"



My friend is Antonio.  
he tells jokes they are  
funny. Antonio has great  
ideas and he shares ideas  
with me. we play at  
recess together. Joaquin

**Student Paper #1  
(First Grade Student)  
Commentary—Exemplary Example**

**Title: “Forever Friends”**

**Ideas and Content:**

- The sentences embellish and expand on the topic.
- The topic includes several details.
- Writing has clarity and focus.

**Organization:**

- The writing is tailored to the audience.
- One idea leads to the next.
- The ideas are organized, with elaboration.

**Voice:**

- The writing shows the writer’s relationship with his friend.

**Word Choice:**

- The writer uses nouns and verbs correctly.
- The paper includes striking words and phrases: “Antonio has great ideas and he shares ideas with me.”

**Sentence Fluency:**

- Rhythm and cadence in the writing is evident.
- One sentence leads to the next.
- Writer uses multiple sentence lengths with varied beginnings.

**Conventions:**

- Most high frequency words are spelled correctly.
- Capitalization and punctuation are generally correct.
- Some words are phonetically correct with readable spelling: *grat*, *tels*.

**What to do next with this student:**

- Work on beginning capitalization.
- Encourage revision to add details.
- Work on legibility and spacing between words.

**Student Paper #2**  
**(First Grade Student)**

**Title: "Forever Friends"**

She is funny and she likes to Jump  
Rope. we like to splay to. and she  
nica to me. she come to my house  
when I have my duB house.

**Student Paper #2  
(First Grade Student)  
Commentary—Average Example**

**Title: “Forever Friends”**

**Ideas and Content:**

- The paper includes five ideas and elaborates on only one.
- The writing shows clarity and focus.

**Organization:**

- The writing includes one main topic.
- The writer uses connecting words.

**Voice:**

- The writing shows beginning use of voice.

**Word Choice:**

- The words are appropriate for the writing.

**Sentence Fluency:**

- The subject-and-verb pattern in sentences is well established.

**Conventions:**

- All high frequency words are spelled correctly.
- Some periods are used in appropriate places.

**What to do next with this student:**

- Work on beginning capitalization.
- Encourage risk taking with sentence variety and word choice.
- Encourage revision by adding more details.
- Use read-alouds to identify the use of voice and connect use of voice to student writing.
- Encourage the child to reread the final piece for clarity.

## First Grade Writing Lesson #2 with Social Studies Prompt

<b>Title:</b>	My Room
<b>Grade:</b>	First Grade
<b>Core Standards:</b>	Language Arts Standard 8—Students write daily to communicate effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences. Integrated K-2 Core Standard III-Objective 3b—Students will create representations that show size relationships among objects of the home, classroom, school, or playground.
<b>Objective:</b>	Students will create a map of their room and write a descriptive paragraph about their room.
<b>Time required:</b>	Four 40-minute sessions
<b>Materials:</b>	Compass rose <i>My Map Book</i> by Sara Finelli <i>Mapping Penny's World</i> by Loreen Leedy Classroom maps Treasure 9" x 12" white art paper Word web Lined paper

### What to do:

#### Session 1

1. Review a compass rose and the directional words.
2. Have a group discussion about how to find a treasure. What do you need in order to find a hidden treasure? Tell students a treasure will be hidden in the classroom.
3. Put students into four (4) teams. Give each team a map of the classroom. Include an **X** on the map where the treasure is hidden.
4. Have the four (4) teams work together to find the treasure.



5. After a team has found the treasure, review the classroom map and the directional words. Have each group take turns hiding the treasure and marking a new spot on the classroom map.

## Session 2

1. Start by reading *My Map Book* by Sara Finelli. Share all of Sara's maps with the students. Discuss each one. Talk about the concept of mapping; review what a map is, what it does, and what type of information it gives the reader. Why do maps include pictures and words?
2. Ask students to make a map of any concept that is important to them. It could be a map of a place, a map of feelings, a map of a holiday, or a map of their favorite \_\_\_\_\_. There are many things they could map, just like Sara did in the book. Encourage originality. The students' maps should include pictures and words.

## Session 3

Read the book *Mapping Penny's World* by Loreen Leedy. Stop and discuss the details included on each map. Review the parts of a map.

2. Have the students create a map of their room today. Make sure that it includes a compass rose. Have the students close their eyes and create a mental image of their bedroom. Tell them not to leave anything out, even the toys on their floor or pictures on the wall.

## Session 4

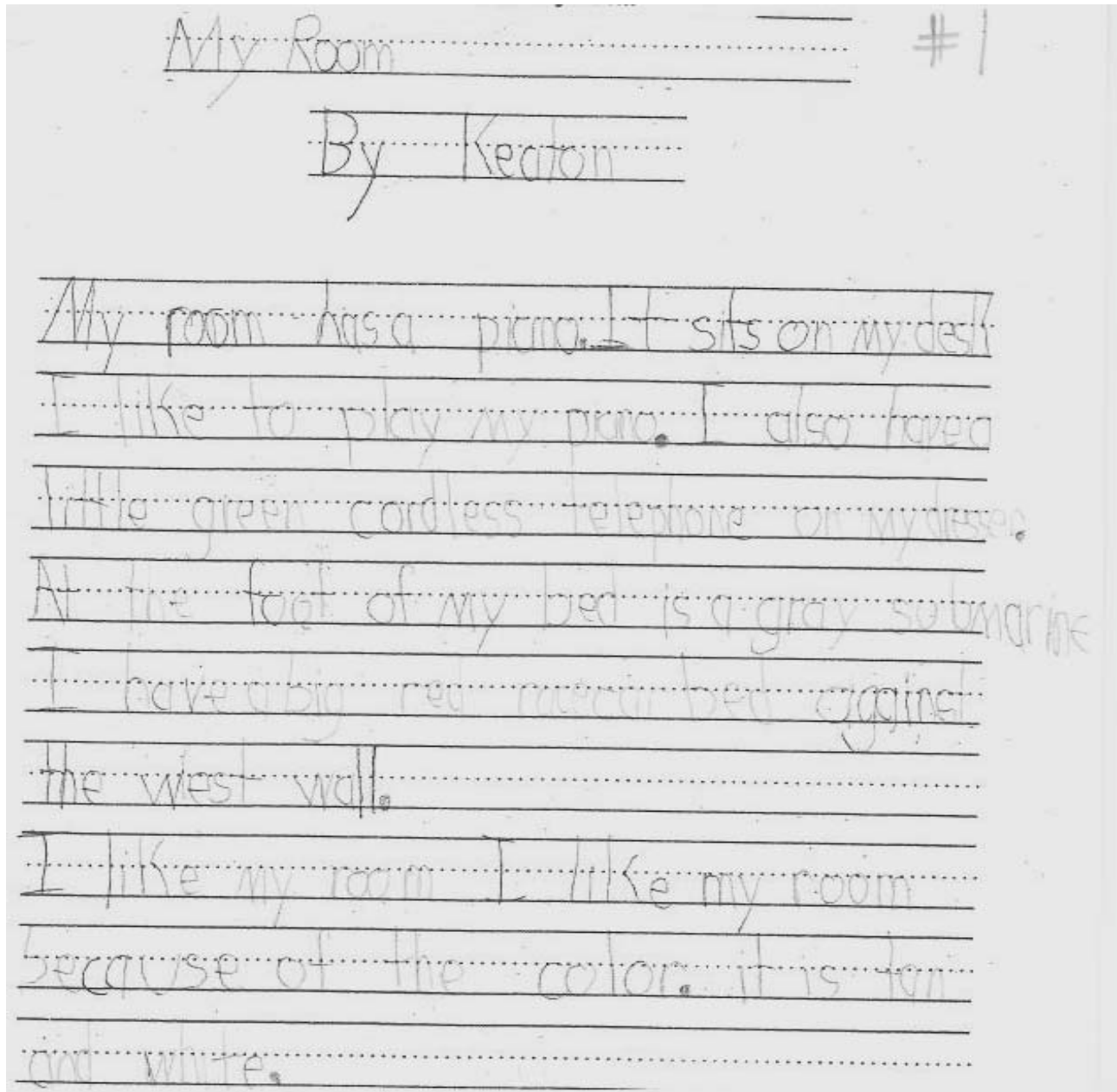
1. Present a map of the classroom, preferably one you have drawn. Tell the students you are thinking of adjectives that will help them describe the classroom. Help them list descriptive words that describe the classroom on a word web. Make sure the word web includes vivid words and details (colors, shapes, directions).
2. Take the details that you listed and model how to write a descriptive paragraph about the classroom.
3. Next, have the students look at the maps they created. Have the students think of adjectives and describing words they could use to describe their own room. Have them use a word web to brainstorm all the little details in their room.

4. Finally, have them write a descriptive paragraph that supports the map of their room.

**Writing Prompt:** Write a descriptive paper that will help the reader create a vivid mental image of your room (including detail and describing words).

Student Paper #1  
(First Grade Student)

Title: "My Room"



**Student Paper #1**  
**(First Grade Student)**  
**Commentary—Exemplary Example**

**Title: “My Room”**

**Ideas and Content:**

- Writer uses specific details and descriptions.
- Writing is narrow and focused and on one topic.
- Writer makes attempts to introduce the topic.

**Organization:**

- One idea leads to the next with an attempt to use transition words.
- The writer attempts to introduce the topic.

**Voice:**

- Writing is based on individual experience.
- Writing is expressive and descriptive.
- The writer shares emotions: “I like my room because...”

**Word Choice:**

- Avoids repetition of descriptive words.
- Includes repetition of phrase “I like.”
- Uses descriptive and action words to create vivid images: “little green cordless phone,” “gray submarine,” and “big race car bed against the west wall.”

**Sentence Fluency:**

- The writer consistently uses variety in sentence length and beginning.
- The writer shows control over standard grammar.
- Writing has a natural cadence and flow.

**Conventions:**

- Spelling of high frequency and regular words correct.
- The writer consistently uses spaces between words.
- End punctuation is used.

Student Paper #2  
(First Grade Student)

Title: "My Room"

My Room  
By Nick Odon #2

My room is tan with white  
trim and brown carpet. I have a  
fluffy black bear on my wall. I  
have minni pine trees with lights  
and minni bears. My bed and  
dresser is brown with red and  
green sheets. I try my best to  
keep my room clean.

**Student Paper #2**  
**(First Grade Student)**  
**Commentary—Exemplary Example**

**Title: “My Room”**

**Ideas and Content:**

- Writer uses specific details and descriptions.
- Writing is narrow, focused and on one topic.

**Organization:**

- Writer attempts to introduce and conclude the piece.
- Details follow a logical order.

**Voice:**

- Writing is based on individual experience: “I try my best...”
- Writing is expressive and descriptive.

**Word Choice:**

- Avoids repetition of descriptive words and phrases.
- Uses descriptive and action words to create vivid images, “fluffy black bear” and “mini pine trees with lights.”

**Sentence Fluency:**

- Writer consistently uses variety in sentence length and beginning.
- One sentence leads to the next.
- Writing has a natural cadence and flow.

**Conventions:**

- Spelling of high frequency words correct.
- Uses transitional spelling.
- Correct use of punctuation and capitalization.

Student Paper #3  
(First Grade Student)

Title: "My Room"

My Room #3  
By Brooklyn

I share a room with  
my sister Erika.  
It has pink walls.  
We have bunk beds  
along one side.  
We have fairies on  
our bed spreads.  
Most of the time  
the floor is clean.

**Student Paper #3**  
**(First Grade Student)**

**Title: "My Room"**

Breakfast

ceiling fan to use  
on hot nights.

our ceiling is Sloppat



**Student Paper #3  
(First Grade Student)  
Commentary—High Average Example**

**Title: “My Room”**

**Ideas and Content:**

- Writer uses some details and descriptions.
- Writing is narrow, focused, and on one topic.

**Organization:**

- Writer attempts to introduce and conclude the piece.
- The sequencing is logical.

**Voice:**

- Writing is based on individual experience.
- Writing is simple, but expressive.

**Word Choice:**

- Writer uses simple descriptive words.
- Writer uses environmental, general, or high frequency words well.
- Repeats “We have...”

**Sentence Fluency:**

- Writer attempts to use a variety of sentence beginnings.
- Starting to show control over sequencing.

**Conventions:**

- Writer spells high frequency words correctly.
- Basic punctuation is correct.
- Variable use of capitals on proper nouns.

## First Grade Writing Lesson #3 with Social Studies Prompt

**Title:** Save a Symbol

**Grade:** First Grade

**Core Standards:** Language Arts Standard 8—Students write daily to communicate effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences.  
Integrated K-2 Core Standard II, Objective 2e—Students will show respect for state and national symbols and patriotic traditions; recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Objective:** Students will research national symbols and write a persuasive paper about one symbol.

**Time Required:** Five 50-minute sessions

**Materials:** Research resources for each national symbol, including books, Internet access, and videos.  
Save a Symbol Planning Sheet  
Mini-Report form

**What to do:**

### Session 1

1. Introduce the new vocabulary word **symbol**. A symbol is something that stands for something else. There are many symbols to represent the United States. We are going to learn about the different symbols of the United States of America, and you can choose your favorite symbol for your report. Where else could you find symbols? Brainstorm and discuss the different symbols throughout the world, town, on maps, in classroom, etc.
2. Introduce the national symbols: the White House, bald eagle, flag, Pledge of Allegiance, Statue of Liberty, and Liberty Bell.
3. Read a book about a national symbol(s).

### Session 2

1. Tell the students the President has called to tell us that due to budget cuts, the United States can keep only one symbol. Their job is to research the different

symbols of America and then write a persuasive paper on one symbol to help the President decide which symbol to keep.

2. Show the students the "Save a Symbol Planning Sheet." Model how to complete the sheet. Before they can choose which symbol to keep, they need to learn about each one. Each symbol is listed on the sheet. Below each symbol, model how to write down three interesting facts about the symbol. Ask, "Where can you find facts about the symbols?" Brainstorm resources, including books, videos, Internet sites, and interviewing people.
3. Allow the students to work in groups to complete the Planning Sheet. Rotate and support student groups as necessary.
4. Support the groups as they use available resources in the school to research new and interesting facts about the national symbols.

### **Session 3**

1. Provide time for student groups to complete their Planning Sheets. Instruct them that they will complete the final part of the project on their own. Each student selects a symbol to write about. Make a list of each student and which symbol he/she will write about.
2. Provide students with the writing prompt.

### **Session 4**

1. Explain to students what is expected in their report about a symbol. In their report they are to include:
  - a. Three facts about their symbol.
  - b. Three reasons why the President should chose to keep their symbol.
2. Pass out a Mini-Report form to each child. Model how to complete the form. Provide time for students to complete their own Mini-Report form.
3. Model how to transfer the information on their Mini-Report form into a paragraph.
4. Provide students with time to write.

**Writing Prompt:** The President has called to tell us that the United States can only keep one national symbol. Your job will be to research the national symbols and write a persuasive paper about one symbol. Your paper should help the President decide which symbol to keep.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Save A Symbol Planning Sheet

The Flag	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*</li><li>*</li><li>*</li></ul>
Bald Eagle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*</li><li>*</li><li>*</li></ul>
Liberty Bell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*</li><li>*</li><li>*</li></ul>
White House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*</li><li>*</li><li>*</li></ul>
Statue of Liberty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*</li><li>*</li><li>*</li></ul>
Pledge of Allegiance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>*</li><li>*</li><li>*</li></ul>

## Links for Research

United States of America



<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/k-2/symbols/flag.html>

<http://www.enchantedlearning.com/crafts/books/julyfourth/Flag.shtml>



<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/k-2/symbols/ladyliberty.html>

<http://www.nps.gov/stli/prod02.htm>



<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/k-2/symbols/eagle.html>

<http://www.worldkids.net/eac/eagle.html>



<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/k-2/symbols/whitehouse.html>

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/kids/index2.html>



<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/k-2/symbols/libertybell.html>

<http://www.ushistory.org/libertybell/links.html>

**BONUS: Email the President** Be sure to scroll down the page to reach the email addresses.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/kids/contact/>

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Mini Report Form

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### Symbol

Facts:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Reasons why the President should choose your symbol:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

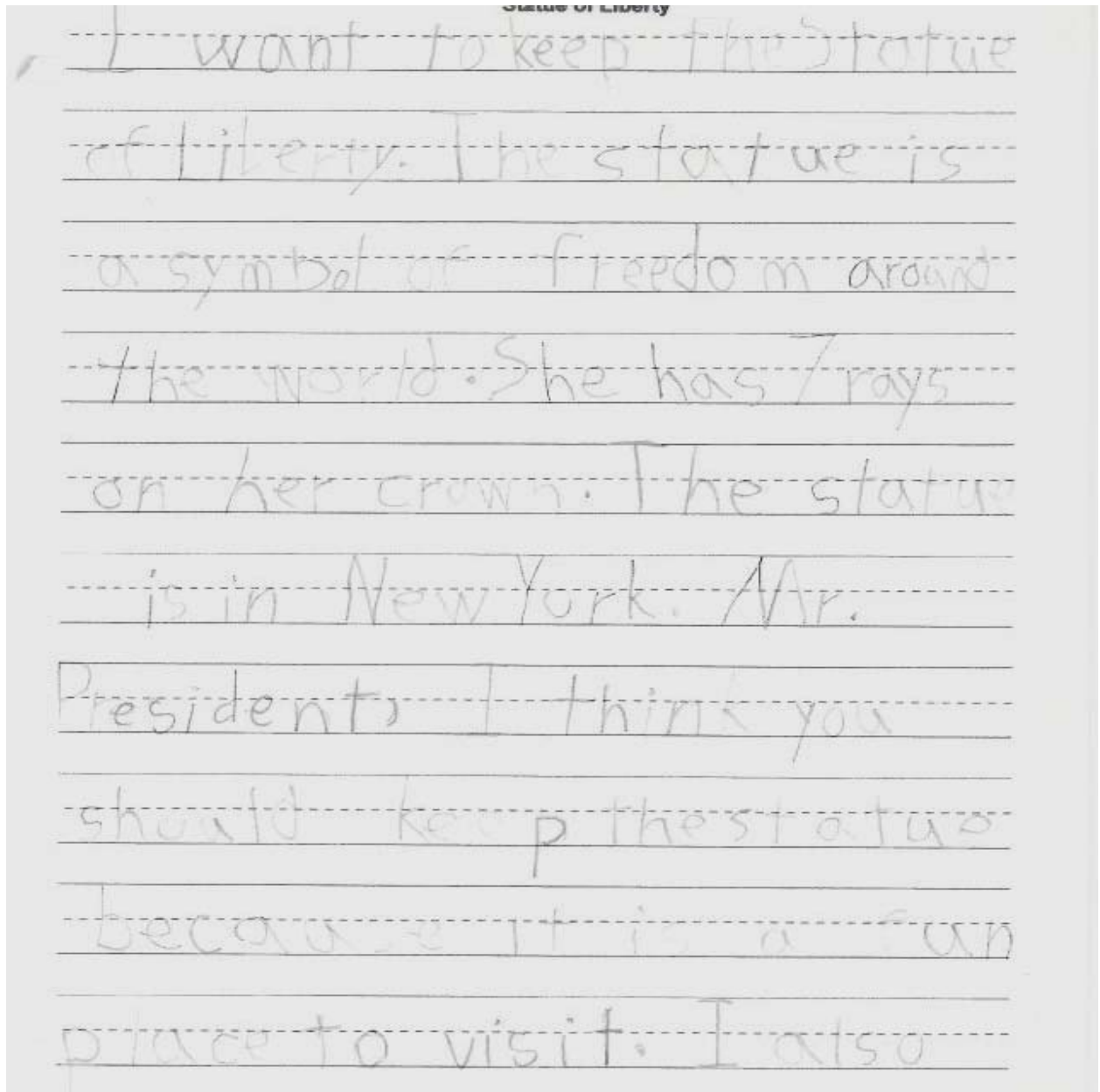
3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Student Paper #1**  
**(First Grade Student)**

**Title: "Save a Symbol"**  
**"Statue of Liberty"**



**Student Paper #1**  
**(First Grade Student)**

**Title: "Save a Symbol"**  
**"Statue of Liberty"**

think you should keep  
it because it was  
a gift from France.  
It's over 300 feet  
tall.



**Student Paper #1  
(First Grade Student)  
Commentary—Exemplary Example**

**Title: “Save a Symbol”  
“Statue of Liberty”**

**Ideas and Content:**

- Writer makes a point and uses specific details.
- Writer understands topic well and provides supportive facts.

**Organization:**

- Piece follows report format.
- Introduction establishes a clear purpose.

**Voice:**

- Writer’s point of view is evident.
- Writer has a clear sense of audience and writes to elicit audience emotion.
- Writer conveys a deep understanding of the topic.

**Word Choice:**

- Writer uses specific words and descriptions: “7 rays on crown,” “gift from France,” and “300 feet tall.”
- Writer repeats call to action: “you should keep...”

**Sentence Fluency:**

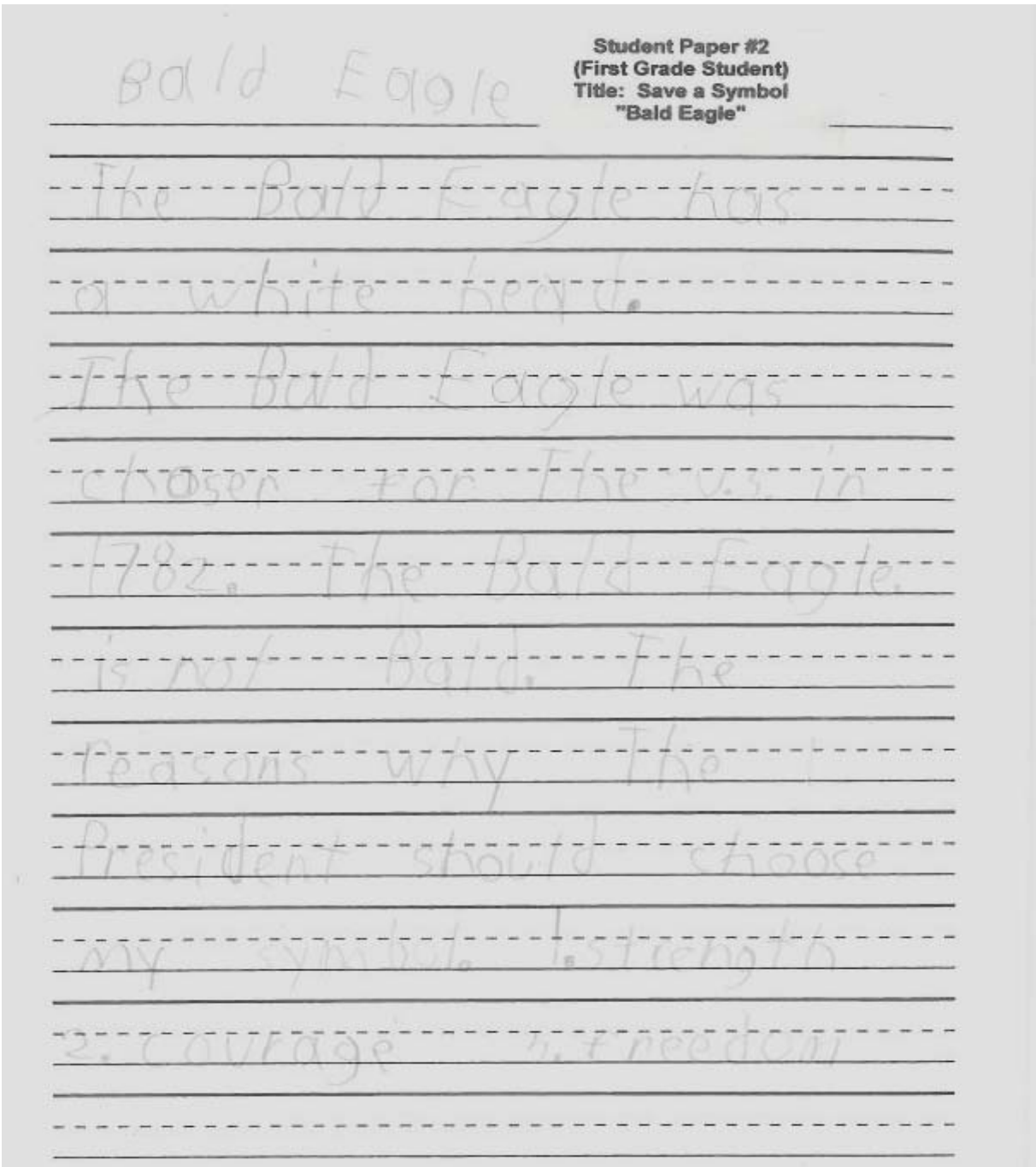
- Writing has rhythm and flow.
- Writer uses a variety of sentence beginnings and lengths.
- Writer shows control over standard grammar.

**Conventions:**

- Spelling of high frequency words is correct.
- Basic punctuation and capitalization is correct.

**Student Paper #2  
(First Grade Student)**

**Title: "Save a Symbol"  
"Bald Eagle"**



**Student Paper #2  
(First Grade Student)  
Commentary—High Average**

**Title: “Save a Symbol”  
“Bald Eagle”**

**Ideas and Content:**

- Writer makes a point and uses specific details.
- Writer understands topic well and provides supportive facts.

**Organization:**

- Piece follows report format.
- Transition sentence connects facts with persuasive reasons.
- No introduction or conclusion.

**Voice:**

- Writer’s point of view is evident.
- Writer has a clear sense of audience and writes to elicit action.
- Writer conveys a deep understanding of the topic.

**Word Choice:**

- Writer uses specific words and descriptions, “white head” and “chose in 1782.”
- Writer uses action words, “President should choose.”

**Sentence Fluency:**

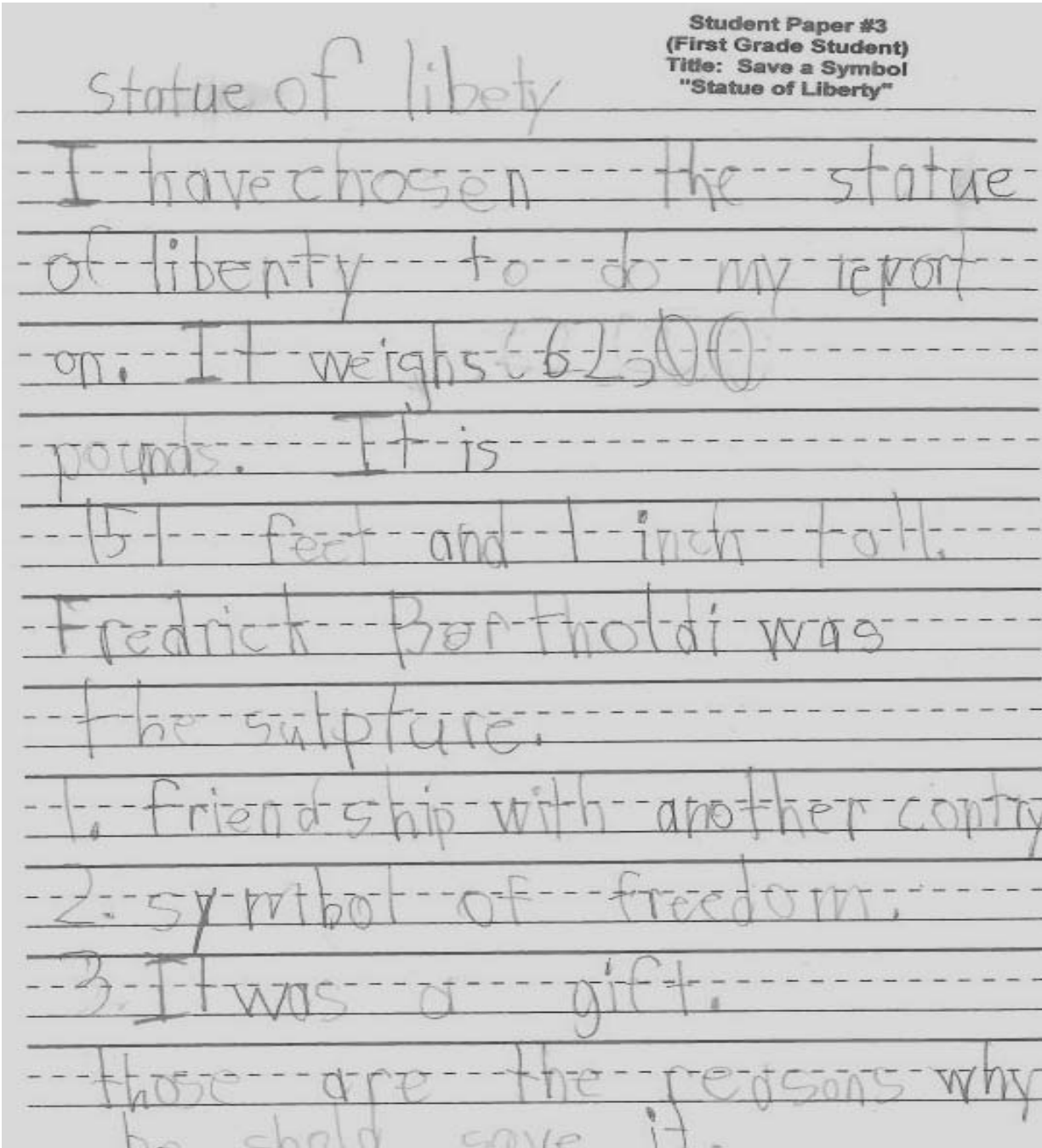
- Writer varies sentence beginnings and length.
- Writing has rhythm and flow.
- Writer shows control of standard grammar.

**Conventions:**

- Spelling of high frequency words is correct.
- Basic punctuation and capitalization is usually correct.

Student Paper #3  
(First Grade Student)

Title: "Save a Symbol"  
"Statue of Liberty"



**Student Paper #3  
(First Grade Student)  
Commentary—High Average Example**

**Title: “Save a Symbol”  
“Statue of Liberty”**

**Ideas and Content:**

- Writer provides a clear purpose for writing.
- Writer states a main idea and provides supportive facts.

**Organization:**

- Piece follows report format.
- Writer provides a clear introduction and conclusion.

**Voice:**

- Writer’s point of view is evident.
- Writer has a clear sense of audience and purpose.
- Writer conveys a specific and deep understanding of the topic.

**Word Choice:**

- Writer uses specific words and descriptions: “weighs 62,000 pounds,” “151 feet and 1 inch tall,” and “Fredrick Bortholdi was the sculpture.”
- Writer uses action words: “he should save it.”

**Sentence Fluency:**

- Writer uses simple and compound sentences.
- Writer uses a variety of sentence beginnings.
- Writer shows control over grammar.

**Conventions:**

- Spelling of high frequency words is correct.
- Most capitalization and basic punctuation is correct.

**Student Paper #4**  
**(First Grade Student)**

**Title: "Save a Symbol"**  
**"The Flag"**

**Student Paper #4**  
**(First Grade Student)**  
**Title: Save a Symbol**  
**"The Flag"**

The Flag

I Love the flag.

I has 13 stripes.

7 are red and 6 are white

50 stars are on it

Mr president shoot pick

the flag cuz it is pretty.

It is colorful and everyon

nows it is for are country.

**Student Paper #4  
(First Grade Student)  
Commentary—Average Example**

**Title: “Save a Symbol”  
“The Flag”**

**Ideas and Content:**

- Writer has a clear purpose and provides supportive details.
- Illustration enhances the writing (not shown).
- Writer understands topic well.

**Organization:**

- Piece follows report format.
- Writer attempts to provide an introduction and conclusion.

**Voice:**

- Writer’s point of view is evident.
- Writer has a clear sense of audience and purpose.
- Writer calls for action.

**Word Choice:**

- Writer uses specific words and descriptions: “it has 13 stripes” and “50 stars are on it.”
- Writer uses action words: “should pick.”

**Sentence Fluency:**

- Simple and compound sentences are used.
- Writer varies sentence beginnings.

**Conventions:**

- High frequency words are spelled correctly.
- Writer has control of most capitalization.

Student Paper #5  
(First Grade Student)

Title: "Save a Symbol"  
"The Flag"

Student Paper #5  
(First Grade Student)  
Title: Save a Symbol  
"The Flag"

The flag.

It has 13 stripes

It has 50 stars. It is red and  
white and blue.

You should save the

flag. 1. for freedom 2. for

Wm. to have

Kate



**Student Paper #5  
(First Grade Student)  
Commentary—Low Example**

**Title: “Save a Symbol”  
“The Flag”**

**Ideas and Content:**

- Writer attempts to make a point.
- Meaning of general ideas is recognizable.
- Some details are present.

**Organization:**

- Writer attempts to follow report format.
- Lacks transitions.

**Voice:**

- Writer expresses a purpose and point of view.
- Writer has a sense of audience.

**Word Choice:**

- Writer uses specific descriptions: “It has 13 stripes,” and “It has 50 stars.”
- Writer uses action words: “should save.”

**Sentence Fluency:**

- Some sentences begin the same way.

**Conventions:**

- Writer spells some high frequency words correctly.
- Writer uses some phonetic spelling.
- Capitals begin most sentences.
- Spacing is appropriate.

## First Grade Writing Lesson #4 with Science Prompt

**Title:** Water

**Grade:** First Grade

**Core Standards:** Language Arts Standard 8—Students write daily to communicate effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences.  
Integrated K-2 Core Standard III, Objective 2a—Observe and measure characteristics of water as a solid and liquid.

**Objective:** Students will write a descriptive paragraph about what they enjoy doing in water as a solid or water as a liquid.

**Time Required:** 40 minutes

**Materials:** Water, snow, and ice  
Lined paper

### **What to do:**

1. As a follow-up to science experiments with snow and ice, have the students discuss things they could do with water as a liquid and things they could do with water as a solid.
2. Brainstorm these ideas on the board.
3. Have the students write and illustrate about some things they like about water as a solid or water as a liquid.

**Writing Prompt:** Do you enjoy playing in water as a solid or water as a liquid? Write about some of the things you like to do in water as a solid or water as a liquid.

Student Paper #1  
(First Grade Student)

Title: "Water"



--I like water as a--  
--liquid. I like to go--  
--swimming. I like to run--  
--through the sprinkler.-----  
I like to slide through the  
sprinkler.

**Student Paper #1**  
**(First Grade Student)**  
**Commentary—Exemplary Example**

**Title: “Water”**

**Ideas and Content:**

- Writer uses specific examples to develop main point.
- Illustration enhances the writing.
- Writer addresses prompt and understands the topic well.

**Organization:**

- Beginning sentence introduces main point.
- Supporting details follow the main point.

**Voice:**

- Writer uses personal experiences to convey understanding of the topic.

**Word Choice:**

- Writer uses nouns and verbs correctly.
- Writer uses several action words: “slide” and “run.”
- Repetition of the phrase “I like.”

**Sentence Fluency:**

- Uses simple sentences.
- Relies on repetition or pattern sentence “I like.”

**Conventions:**

- Spelling of high frequency words is correct.
- Most spelling correct on other words.
- Basic punctuation and capitalization is correct.

Student Paper #2  
(First Grade Student)

Title: "Water"



I like it solid cause i like to  
slide on ice. Because there  
is water in it. Some times i  
like to get my bike and  
slide on it. Me and my brother  
like to do it at our house.

**Student Paper #2  
(First Grade Student)  
Commentary—Exemplary Average Example**

**Title: “Water”**

**Ideas and Content:**

- Writer uses specific examples to develop main point.
- Illustration enhances the writing.
- Writer addresses prompt and understands the topic well.

**Organization:**

- Beginning sentence introduces main point.
- Main idea is developed with specific details.
- Attempts at sequencing.

**Voice:**

- Writer uses personal experiences to convey understanding of the topic.

**Word Choice:**

- Writer uses nouns and verbs correctly.
- Repetition of action word “slide” and phrase “I like.”

**Sentence Fluency:**

- Writer varies sentence lengths and beginnings.
- Writer is starting to show control over standard grammar.

**Conventions:**

- Uses standard grammar at beginning and end of sentence.
- Spells high frequency words correctly.

Student Paper #3  
(First Grade Student)

Title: "Water"



**Student Paper # 3**  
**(First Grade Student)**  
**Commentary—Low Example**

**Title: “Water”**

**Ideas and Content:**

- Writer attempts to address prompt.
- Text is limited, but a main point and example are included.
- Illustration included to enhance writing.

**Organization:**

- Beginning sentence introduces main point.
- Main idea is developed with an example.
- Attempts at sequencing.
- No real ending.

**Voice:**

- Writer uses personal experiences to convey understanding of the topic.

**Word Choice:**

- Repetition of phrase “I like.”
- Limited text, but writer attempts words using phonetic letter strings such as “down” and “sprays.”

**Sentence Fluency :**

- Simple sentences.
- Writer understands noun and verb usage.

**Conventions:**

- Uses spaces between words.
- Spells high frequency words correctly.
- Beginning capitalization is present.
- Mixes upper- and lower-case letters.